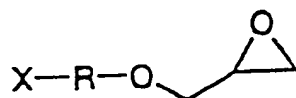


IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

6. (Amended) The paint composition according to claim 1, characterized in that it contains as a coalescent agent a glycidyl ether according to formula I

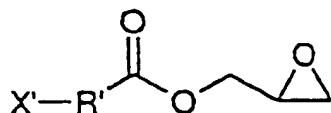


I

wherein R is a linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated C₃-C₂₀ hydrocarbon, optionally containing one or several hydroxyl groups, and X represents hydrogen or a hydroxyl group.

7. (Amended) The paint composition according to claim 1, characterized in that the hydrocarbon residue of the glycidyl ether is derived from 1-butanol, 2-butanol, isobutanol, 1-pentanol, isopentanol, 1-hexanol, 2-ethylhexanol, 1-heptanol, 1-octanol, 2-ethyl-1,3-hexanediol, neopentyl glycol, 2-butyl-2-ethyl-1,3-propanediol, trimethylol ethane, trimethylol propane, 1,4-butanediol, neodecane alcohol, 1-6-hexanediol, 1,10-decanediol or 2-ethyl-2-hexen-1-ol.

8. (Amended) The paint composition according to claim 1, characterized in that it contains as a film forming agent a glycidyl ester according to formula II



II

wherein R' is a linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated C₂-C₂₀ hydrocarbon, optionally containing one or several hydroxyl groups, and

X represents a methyl group, methylene hydroxy group or a carboxyl or lower carboxylate group.

9. (Amended) The paint composition according to claim 1, characterized in that the carboxylic acid residue of the glycidyl ester is derived from butanoic acid, isobutanoic acid, pentanoic acid, isopentanoic acid, 1-hexanoic acid, 2-ethylhexanoic acid, heptanoic acid, octanoic acid, neodecanoic acid, 2-hydroxyisobutanoic acid, 2,2-dimethyl-3-hydroxypropanoic acid, 2-ethyl-2-hexenoic acid, oleic acid, linolic acid, adipic acid, fumaric acid, maleic acid, succinic acid, glutaric acid or an anhydride or another derivative thereof.

10. (Amended) The paint composition according to claim 1, characterized in that the coalescent agent is 2-ethylhexylglycidyl ether, octyl glycidyl ether, mono- or diether of neopentylglycol or triglycidyl ether of trimetanolpropane, or 2-ethylhexyl glycidyl ester, octyl glycidyl ester or isopentyl glycidyl ester or methyl glycidyl ester of glutaric acid.

11. (Amended) The paint composition according to claim 1, characterized in that its pH is below about 8.5, preferably below 8.0.

12. (Amended) The paint composition according to claim 1, characterized in that it contains in addition to the glycidyl ether and/or ester at least one other coalescent agent, the proportion of the glycidyl ether and/or ester of the coalescent agents of the composition amounting to at least 20 wt.%, preferably at least 50 wt.%.